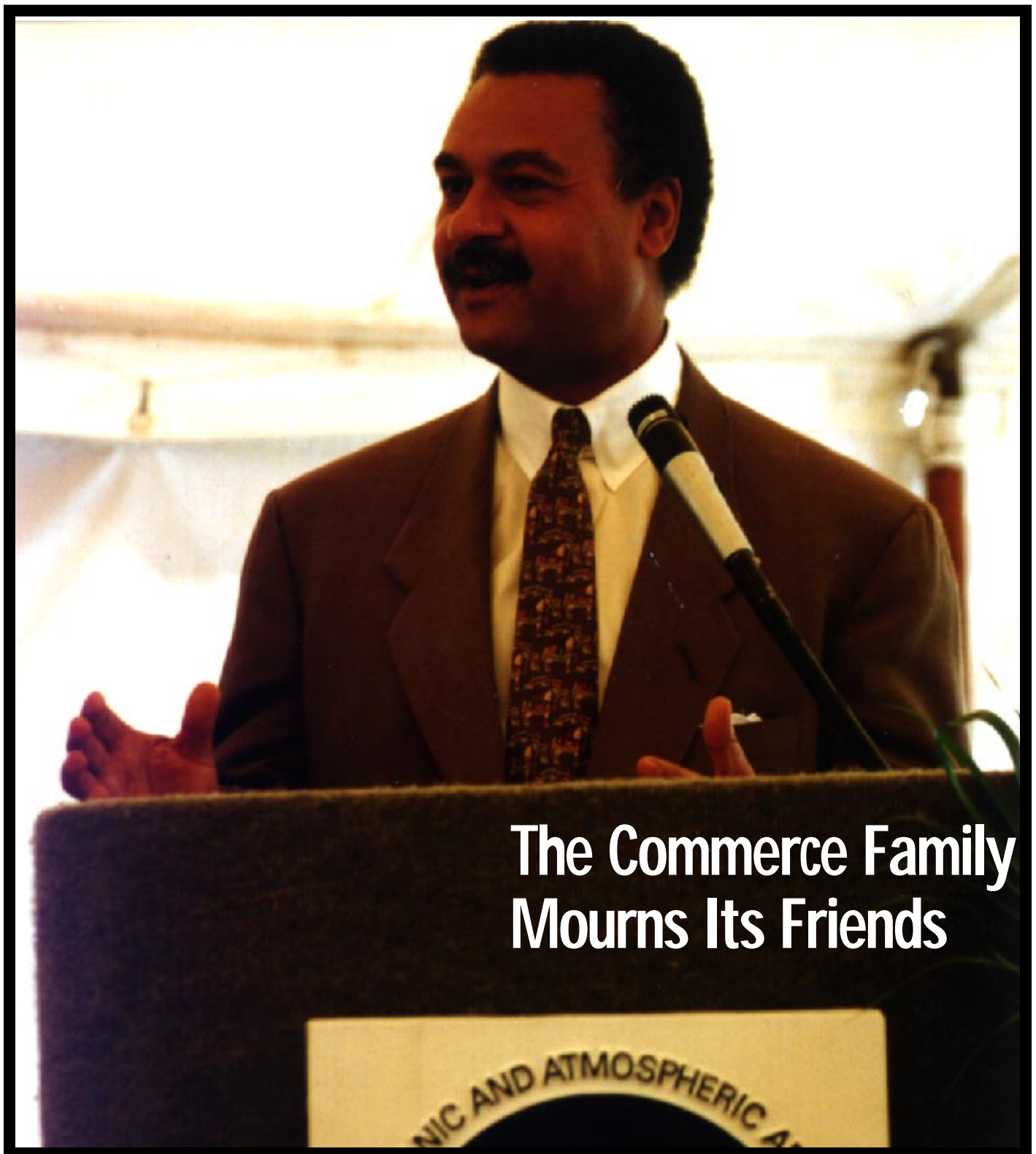


NOAA REPORT



Vol. V, No. 5

May 1996



**The Commerce Family
Mourns Its Friends**



One Family

Tragedies bring people together. They give us a painful communality, a common bond, create milestones of despair. The generation that fought and survived through World War II remembers exactly where they were when they heard the news that Franklin Roosevelt had died. And since then, we as Americans have had too many other chances to share our grief on a national scale. Do you remember where you were when President Kennedy died? Or Martin. Bobby. Oklahoma City. When Challenger fell to earth, we paused together, bewildered and shaken, but united.

We at Commerce now have our own disturbing milestone to deal with, one we'll always remember.

The first news came over the radio about 10 am that horrific day, April 3rd. The cherry blossoms were beginning to bud at the Tidal Basin here in Washington, although the blustery wind and cooler temperatures told us that, this year at least, winter might hang around a little more, just until it was really done with us. Televisions were turned on. Speculation ran rampant—the plane, they said, was “down.” Down? Down where? If it was in the water, they at least had a chance.

But as the day wore on, the truth we tried not to face in the morning became horribly apparent:

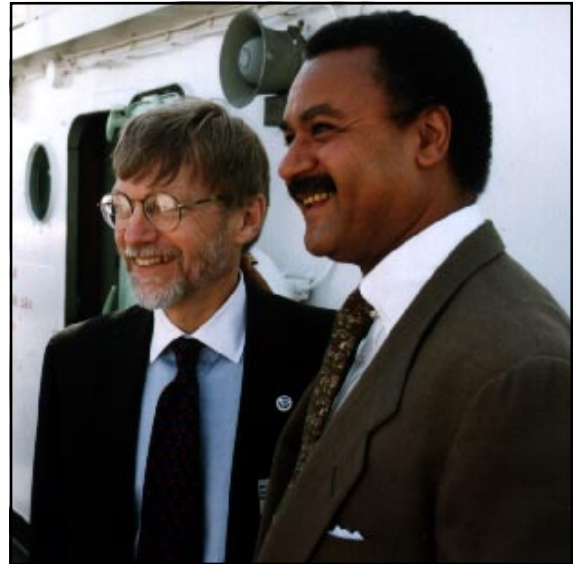
Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown, and 11 Commerce Department employees, our friends and colleagues, had been killed when their plane hit a hillside near the airport at Dubrovnik, Croatia. Two other Federal employees had also died in the crash, along with nationally known businessmen, a reporter for the New York Times and two Croatian nationals.

In the days immediately after, notices were hung here in the Commerce Department building, seemingly taking the place of the leaves that refused to come out for spring. Memorials. Funer-

continued on page 6



NOAA Administrator D. James Baker, Secretary Brown and then-NOAA Chief Scientist Kathryn Sullivan meet local grade school students at the Commerce Department courtyard in 1993.



Dr. Baker and Secretary Brown aboard the NOAA Ship Ferrel at the dedication of the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in 1993.

Ron Brown—A Remembrance

Samuel Johnson said: "It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives." Ron Brown's death was tragic and untimely, and came too soon. We mourn his loss, the loss of thirteen of our Commerce and other Federal agency colleagues, the loss to private industry of the twelve executives, and the loss of the accompanying reporter, interpreter, photographer, and Air Force crew members. What was important in Ron Brown's life was his many accomplishments and his positive and strengthening spirit.

Ron Brown lived his life to help others, and was a man of action in the best sense. His trip to Croatia was an attempt to help build that war-torn region by use of private capital. He encouraged all of the Department of Commerce to work internationally to help accomplish sustainable development. He saw the key links between economic growth and environmental stewardship, and promoted these links nationally through his help for distressed fishing communities and the President's Council on Sustainable Development.

He promoted the links internationally through his many trade development missions, and encouraged me and others in the Department to use our interna-

tional contacts to promote sustainable development. At the very time of his death, several of the Department bureau heads were traveling internationally on missions of trade and sustainable development: for example, I was in China, ESA's Ev Ehrlich was in Paris, ITA's Tim Hauser was in Vietnam: all

D. JAMES BAKER



missions to develop closer relations with countries of key importance to this changing world.

Ron Brown saw the Department of Commerce as the Department of the Future: a Department where the issues of sustainability all come together: economic growth, protection of life and property, stewardship of natural resources, science and technology, and environmental and economic information. He saw the opponents of the Department as ones who look backwards to the past; rather than to a future that depends as much on how the world views America as on how America views the world.

For NOAA, Ron Brown was a tireless advocate with the Administration, with the Congress, with the business and environmental community, and with the public. He recognized the importance of partnerships with the private sector, and held business/government roundtables. He was fearless in dealing with NOAA issues, and enthusiastic about helping us achieve our goals. He gave us advice and guidance that was politically astute and strong in principle. He was the perfect boss in many senses; most often saying "tell me what you want me to do, and I will make it happen." And he did.

In one of his last speeches, Ron Brown was answering those who questioned why NOAA should be in the Department of Commerce. Without notes, he eloquently spoke of the farmer who needs weather and forecasts for crops, the fishers who need science and status of fish stocks, the mariner and pilots who need accurate charts, and the insurance companies who need help with coastal development. "Tell those people that they are not part of national and international commerce," he said, "and they will throw you out of the room." And he meant it.

continued on page 6



Adam Darling
Confidential Assistant, Office
of the Deputy Secretary



Gail Dobert
Deputy Director, Office of
Business Liaison



Carol Hamilton
Press Secretary, Office of
Public Affairs



Kathryn Hoffman
Special Assistant to the
Secretary



Duane Christian
Security Officer, DOC



Ronald H. Brown
Secretary of Commerce

Sharing Our Memories

In a NOAA-wide e-mail earlier this month, we asked you for your remembrances of Secretary Brown and those who died with him. Here are some excerpts from those responses:

I had the privilege to work closely with Naomi Warbasse. I will always remember her energy, and the trust she had in me to get the project done in a very short while.—Annita L. Wimbish

Steve Kaminski loved to sing, so it was not unusual to hear him singing as he got off the elevator on the 5th floor of the U.S. Embassy

in Tokyo and enter the FCS office saying in a very upbeat way "Good morning everyone, what a great day."—Ann Hennelly

Duane Christian was a courageous man. As a friend he transcended societal bounds of racism, economic class, rank and stature. He was a good friend who will forever serve as my model for fairness, truth, responsibility, and friendship.—Alan F. Brown

I had the honor of guiding Ron Brown on a tour of the Silver Spring campus in 1993. His devotion to the importance of a diverse workforce, his leadership through extremely difficult budgetary uncertainties, and his



President Clinton, with the Vice President, Mrs. Clinton and the Cabinet in attendance, speaks to Commerce employees at the Department's auditorium the day of the tragedy, April 3.



(Left) President Clinton, the Brown family, Mrs. Clinton and Vice President Gore at Dover Air Force Base, as our friends and colleagues came home.



Stephen Kaminski
Senior Commercial Service
Officer, US&FCS



Kathryn Kellogg
Confidential Assistant, Office
of Business Liaison



Charles F. Meissner
Assistant Secretary for
International Economic Policy



William Morton
Deputy Asst. Secretary ITA

unfailing reminders of the value of our work will be long remembered.—Donna Marino

I met Ron Brown last year during the NOAA Fish Fry. He had two plates of food in his hands, but he still had time to nod and say hello and a few words. After greeting a few more people, he proceeded to tear up his food. This is how I would like to remember him—a man who could eat, but also took care of business.—Serene White

July 21, 1994: On that day, Ron Brown boldly required DOC leadership at the highest level to personally commit to valuing diversity for all of

our employees by, among other things, adding a separate critical element for diversity management in their evaluation plans. This act of courage did more for furthering the goals of true EEO in the Federal government than anything else I experienced in my 15 years as an African American Program Manager.—Bill Isabel

I am sure that those also were on the plane with the Secretary shared the same trials and tribulations of all Federal workers, including being categorized as “non-essential” during the trying furlough periods. The only thing non-essential was their death. —Russell Wanek ☹️

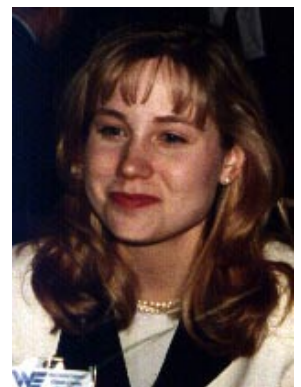


Lawrence Payne
Special Assistant, Office of
Domestic Operations, US&FCS



The casket of Secretary Brown is brought into the Commerce Department lobby to lie in repose for two days. Thousands of mourners lined up outside the building, even in the middle of the night, to say their final goodbyes.

(Right) Secretary Brown's casket lying in repose in the Commerce Department lobby, atop the same pedestal used for President Lincoln's funeral in 1865.



Naomi Warbasse
Deputy Director, C. & E. Europe
Business Info. Center, ITA

Baker

continued from page 3

He had a vision of the future that is shared by the Clinton Administration: helping the economy grow with science, technology, and environmental stewardship so that growth can be sustainable in the long term.

Robert Kaplan, in his recent book, *The Ends of the Earth: a Journey at the Dawn of the 21st Century*, asks how we can achieve global survival in this changing world. He uses Sub-Saharan Africa as an example of a region that is

in a disastrous state: population growth, deforestation, civil wars, and general disintegration. Ron Brown knew that American prosperity ultimately depends on world prosperity, and that world problems must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Ron Brown recently made a trip to Sub-Saharan Africa precisely for this reason: to see how American aid, both from the Government and from private industry, could help divert the region from its disastrous direction. He returned from that trip optimistic that the Federal—private partnership could make a real difference. I was with him in South

Africa when we worked with the Vice President's Binational Commission on similar issues; there we were developing new programs for fisheries and climate forecasting to help establish sustainable economic growth.

Ron Brown's legacy will not be lost. We have set in place a methodology and set of programs that are addressing the major issues of our time. Much remains to be done, but the direction is there; as Emerson put it: "I see that sensible men and conscientious men all over the world were of one religion of well-doing and daring." Ron Brown, with his strong commitment to diversity, would have wanted this quotation to encompass all people, men and women, all races and creeds, but the sense of agreement that well-doing and daring are key elements to a viable world, is one that we all share.

It will take time to absorb the magnitude of the loss, and to rearrange our lives and organizations to account for the drastic changes. In time, we can hope to echo the words of the poet George Herbert:

*And now in age I bud again
After so many deaths, I live and write
I once more smell the dew and rain
And relish versing: O my only light
It cannot be
That I am he
On whom thy tempests fell all night.* ☹

Kantor Named to Succeed Brown

President Clinton named U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor to succeed Ron Brown as Secretary of the Department of Commerce. Kantor, who took office immediately upon being named, will still undergo Senate confirmation hearings.

Kantor, 56, was a friend of Brown's, having accompanied him on many trade missions. He also served as the national chair of the Clinton/Gore '92 campaign while Brown was head of the Democratic National Committee.

"[Ron Brown and I] stood shoulder to shoulder to make sure we grew jobs and raised standards of living, and did what the President said, and that is provide economic opportunity for every American," Kantor said on his nomination. ☹



Former U.S. Trade Representative and new Commerce Secretary Mickey Kantor

Secretary was named. The trees on 14th Street began to show their leaves.

But although some sense of normalcy has returned, we do not forget them.

This issue of *NOAA Report* is dedicated to Secretary Brown and our friends and colleagues, who showed us in death one of the essential truths of humanity—beyond our color, our gender, our background, career or appointee, manager or worker, Republican or Democrat.

When those close to us are taken, we hurt together, we grieve together, we mourn together. We are all, indeed, one family.

—JS ☹

One Family

continued from page 2

als. Moments of silence. Grief counseling. Call a familiar phone number, and you might get voice mail with what was now a sad, plaintive message. Hi! I'm not here right now.

Then, slowly, after the goodbyes and the grieving, in the autumn of our grief, the leaves in the Commerce building fell and disappeared. Notices of baby showers and training classes took their place. Flags were raised to full mast. A new

NOAA Report is a monthly publication for NOAA employees from the Office of Public and Constituent Affairs, Washington. Address comments to:

Editor

NOAA Report

**Office of Public and Constituent Affairs
14th St. & Constitution Ave. NW
Room 6013 HCHB**

Washington, DC 20230-0001
202-482-6090 (voice)

202-482-3154 (fax)

Banyan E-Mail: jerrys@pa@noaa

Internet: jsaff@hq.noaa.gov

CompuServe: 70762,3151

Lori Arguelles ... Director, Office of Public & Constituent Affairs

Jerry Slaff Editor

'This is What Government is All About'

Ron Brown went to the National Weather Service Headquarters in January to hear from men and women who had worked day and night accurately forecasting one of the worst blizzards in Washington history. He left the building in high spirits renewed by stories of extraordinary public service. Before getting in his car, he told those with him, "This is what government is really all about."

This was typical of Ron Brown and his approach to the job of Secretary of Commerce and his other posts during a life committed to public service. He did

**DOUG
HALL**



not view winning elections or receiving appointments to high positions as important unless they led to one thing: a contribution to making our Nation a better place.

I recall my first meeting with the Secretary, then Chairman of the

Democratic National Committee, to brief him about his new department. We spent three or four hours talking about NOAA. He engaged immediately with NOAA's mission. He was excited to have NOAA's satellites, weather stations and ships under his jurisdiction. He saw tremendous opportunity to be part of delivering vital services to the public.

That excitement never dimmed—even when facing tough political issues raised by closing fisheries, locating weather facilities, or efforts to dismantle our department and damage NOAA. When all seemed bleak, when hope was ebbing, Ron Brown never failed to demonstrate the resolve, optimism and incredible life force that enabled him to overcome so many obstacles in his life of accomplishment and fights for justice and opportunity for all Americans.

Just a couple of weeks ago before his death, I talked to Secretary Brown about new regulations for New England fisheries that are provoking sharp political opposition. He didn't ask how we can change this to make it easier. Instead, he wanted to know who he could call, what he could do, to manage the politics and enable us to do the right thing. While I was in his office, he called a Senator and told him of his commitment to protect this resource and the long term economic well-being of New England's fishermen.

Ron Brown embraced politics and public service as one of life's most noble callings. He viewed politics not as an end but as a means of changing our Nation to make it a better place.

He was joined in that fight by many dedicated people: the people in NOAA and the employees in the Department of Commerce across the Nation, some who died with him on a mountainside in a faraway land.

I will miss Ron Brown and the other friends and colleagues we lost last month, but I will always be grateful for the opportunity I had to work with and learn from some of the best people I have ever known. ☺

Ron Brown's Lasting Legacy

Ron Brown and I could never remember exactly where we met, but we did agree that it was when he ran the Washington Urban League and I worked for the District of Columbia Government. I am very proud that, many years later, he and the President selected me to be part of his team at NOAA.

As Dr. Baker and Doug Hall have discussed, Ron Brown cared about programs. But he also cared about people and the environment within which they worked. He placed the full force of his support behind the Administration's Partnership initiatives, ensuring that labor/management relations within the Department of Commerce were revolutionized. We at NOAA have been the beneficiaries of this effort to include more fully union representatives in decisions about working conditions. It was through a partnership working group process that we developed NOAA's implementation of a three-level performance rating system and the structure of an alternative dispute resolution program. Currently we are working with our union partners in developing the parameters for a two-level performance rating program and shortly will begin discussions on a new

streamlined merit assignment program. Perhaps the most successful and structured partnership initiative in NOAA has occurred in the National Weather Service, where an effective labor management relationship has resulted in successful resolutions to several difficult human resources issues related to the modernization.

Through his diversity initiative, Ron Brown was determined that all Department employees should be able to realize their full potential, that they should have equal access to training, promotions and awards, and that their ideas would be heard and valued. He requested from employees not only everything the Department had a right to expect but everything they have to offer as well. His leadership had and will continue to have an immediate and direct impact on the deliberations of NOAA's Diversity Council. Ron's consistent focus on inclusion of all employees in accomplishing the mission of the Department will be the guiding light for the continuing work of our Council.

Both of these initiatives are supported strongly at NOAA and will form part of Ron Brown's lasting legacy. ☺

**DIANA
JOSEPHSON**



I hope all Americans today will be grateful for what all the people who were on that plane did...who did it not out of a sense of their own profit, but out of a sense of what they could do to help America bring peace.

President Bill Clinton at the Commerce Department, April 3, 1996

Employees gather outside the Commerce Department building in Washington for a moment of silence in remembrance of our friends and colleagues who died in Croatia.